



# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA



### Hamfest 2014

N4QT	Hal Bouton	President
W4GRW	Bill Fisher	Vice-Pres.
W3ZL	Cliff Wagoner	Sec.-Treas.
K4MD	Joe Simpkins	Cluster Mgr.
W3OA	Dick Williams	Contest Mgr.
W3GQ	Paul Sturpe	W4 QSL Bureau Manager
WB4BXW	Wayne Setzer	Webmaster
NV4A	John Forbus	Editor

It's almost time for the 2014 Charlotte Hamfest™, sponsored by MARS—W4BFB. It's being held again this year at the Cabarrus Arena (4751 US Highway 49 North Concord, NC 28025), March 7th and 8th. As always, there will be plenty to see and do. There will be vendors with the usual assortment of the latest gear and goodies to drool over. If you're looking for bargains, or just the right widget to complete your latest project, there will also be lots of flea market booths, and it's all indoors in case the weather doesn't cooperate. The cost for an advance ticket is \$7 (via USPS or if you get your ticket from a MARS member, including at the CDXA luncheons) or \$8 using Paypal. Tickets at the door are \$10.00. The forums starting Sat. morning at 10am are going to be well worth the cost of admission, including:

- Kay Craigie, N3KN, President of the ARRL, will present the latest from ARRL. She will also be presenting a special award to CDXA's Roger Burt. (See Page 4 for more information.) Karl Bowman, W4CHX, the new NC Section Manager and a fellow CDXAer will also be presenting, and will have a Q&A session.
- CDXA's Lou Dietrich, gives us an in-depth look at the K9W Commemorative DXpedition to Wake Atoll.
- CDXAer Bill Tippet, W4ZC, will talk about getting DXCC as a Novice.
- Bob Allphin, K4UEE, will be talking about the recently completed FT5ZM Amsterdam Island DXpedition.

There will be VEC testing, and even Bingo if you get tired of all the ham stuff. Also, if you have stuff you want to sell, CDXAers can put two items on the MARS club table for sale ...for free.

CDXA will have a booth, and we'll be raffling off a Nexus 7 with 32GB of memory. Come by to visit, get a raffle ticket (\$2 ea. and \$5 for three), catch up with old friends, and make some new ones. We're also still looking for volunteers to staff the booth. Please use this link ([Shift sign up form](#)) for the automated sign-up form. You'll also get a special CDXA T shirt as a "Thank-You" for working the booth..

Finally, our annual Hamfest dinner is on Friday night March 7th. See Pg 2 for details.

*(Continued on page 2)*

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems	
K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com
W4DXA (AR Cluster via Telnet)	w4dxa.no-ip.com
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600 )	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Skyland Family Restaurant, 4544 South Boulevard, Charlotte, NC

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## DX King News

Dick Williams, W3OA



Item 1: Full details of our DX King Contest and your chances to win a tablet computer are on page 11 of the [January Pileup](#).

Item 2: Here are the first reports for the 2013 DX King competition. These are the scores I have as of January 31:

Call	Category	Countries	Zones	Total
K5EK	Unlimited	205	40	245
K7BV	Unlimited	185	37	222
W4HG	Unlimited	159	37	196
K8YC	Unlimited	102	30	132
WA4DT	Unlimited	92	30	122

Item 3: Don't forget to send me (w3oa@roadrunner.com) your DX marathon scores as of the last day of each month after your score reaches 100.

Item 4: There's still plenty of time to claim the crown.

### The Pileup

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Published monthly 10 times per year, excluding the months of June and December.

The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Yearly dues are \$25.00. A second licensed Amateur family member living in the same household can join for \$5.00 for a total family price of \$30.00 per year. The total price for 3 or more licensed family members living in the same household is only \$35.00 per year. All family members enjoy full member status. Dues are payable annually in December by check or through [the CDXA website](#), to the Secretary/Treasurer:

Cliff Wagoner, W3ZL  
P. O. Box 577  
Davidson, NC 28036

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/Treasurer at the above address or via email at: [jcw53@cornell.edu](mailto:jcw53@cornell.edu).

## Announcing the 2014 CDXA Hamfest Banquet



The Hamfest Banquet will be held Friday March 7<sup>th</sup>, in a private room at the Afton Tavern in Concord, just off exit 54 and I-85 near the YMCA, about 12 miles from the Hamfest. Cocktails and socializing begin at 6:30 this year, and the restaurant has several wine and draft beer specials as well as offering water, coke, diet coke, and tea. A buffet dinner starts at 7:15, so you have time to spend at the Hamfest, and still make it to dinner to brag about whatever jewel you nabbed for a terrific price. Speaking of price, the Banquet price is \$27 per person, *including* tax and tip, payable at the door. To see the entire, mouthwatering menu, (the dessert, called a Skillet Cake, is rumored to be worth the visit by itself) check out the information and RSVP form at <http://goo.gl/fXnfsb>. It will also have links to maps that will let you get directions from your QTH and will provide directions from the Hamfest to the Tavern. There's plenty of parking, but only a limited number of spots are directly in front of the restaurant, so a little bit of walking may be involved.

In case you're wavering, there's one last important detail. Once again, through the generosity of Yaesu and Dennis, K7BV, the grand prize for the night will be a Yaesu transceiver, this year an FT DX 1200, a \$2400 radio, Thanks to Yaesu for the great prize. Someone's going home with a really nice radio!



## ARRL DX Contest Status: CW Was Weekend of February 14 SSB Starts February 28

By Dick Williams, W3OA

Last year CDXA placed 4th in ARRL's Medium Club Category with 49 entries and 26.9 million points. We want to do this well or better in 2014. That's why we are offering such great prizes. There are first place prizes in seven categories and participation prizes at the 1000 QSO, 500 QSO, and 250 QSO levels. The details are on page 10 of last month's [Pileup](#). Win a handsome trophy or a steak dinner! We hope you were able to finish the CW portion of the contest with a great score. The propagation was excellent during the CW weekend.

The ARRL's rules are at <http://www.arrl.org/arrl-dx>. In a nutshell:

Each contest starts at 7 p.m. Friday night and goes for 48 hours.

U.S. stations work as many DXCC entities as possible on 160, 80, 40, 20, 15, and 10.

We send a signal report and state. DX stations send a signal report and power.

Your multiplier is the sum of DXCC entities (except US and Canada) worked per band.

Your final score is your number of QSO points times your number of multipliers.

Don't forget to show your Club name as "Carolina DX Association" (spelled out, without the quotes) in the logs you send to the ARRL. Send your CW logs, in Cabrillo format to [DXCW@arrl.org](mailto:DXCW@arrl.org) by 2359 UTC Tuesday, March 18, 2014. Your SSB logs go to [DXPhone@arrl.org](mailto:DXPhone@arrl.org) and are due 2359 UTC Tuesday, April 1, 2014.

CW Skimmer spots were available for the CW Contest, as explained in an email to all the members before the start of the CW Contest. And we will be exchanging spots during the SSB Contest. Another article in this Pileup has the details.

Please send your score summary (number of QSOs, multiplier, final score) and entry category (single or multiplier, single band or all-band, power level, with or without packet) to [w3oa@roadrunner.com](mailto:w3oa@roadrunner.com) as soon as possible after each contest. And tell me if you want a trophy or Outback card if you made over 1000 QSOs in the two contests combined. We will publish your scores on the CDXA web site as we receive them. Our intent is to award the prizes at the CDXA dinner on March 7 so I need all scores by March 4.

## Packet Enhancements During ARRL DX Contest

Dick Williams, W3OA

The CDXA packet network had extra capabilities during the CW portion of the ARRL DX Contest, as described in the email sent to all members before the CW weekend. There will also be extra capabilities during the SSB weekend. You can take advantage of these capabilities with a Telnet connection to [w3oa.no-ip.org](http://w3oa.no-ip.org). Enhancements for the SSB portion of the contest are as follows:

**ARRL DX Contest – SSB** – The setup for the SSB contest will be the same one we have used for previous contests. The idea is for each CDXA member to send a spot for every station he hears to other CDXA members. This is done with a small program that runs on each member's computer. The program looks for callsigns typed into N1MM and if you are not running stations the program sends out a spot through a telnet connection to the cluster node at [w3oa.no-ip.org](http://w3oa.no-ip.org). This happens even if you don't work the station. After all, a station that's a dupe for you may be new one for me.

I'll be distributing the program and setting up the node about a week before the SSB contest. If you'd like to participate send me an email now ([w3oa@roadrunner.com](mailto:w3oa@roadrunner.com)) and I'll put you on the list to get a copy of the program and detailed instructions. (We will be using the same program we used in CQWW but I still need to send you an updated database to go with it.)

## New Members and a New Record

NI4L, Chris Fox, 2646 Old Wilkesboro Rd., Taylorsville, NC 28681, 828-855-8869, [ni4ldi-pole@gmail.com](mailto:ni4ldi-pole@gmail.com).

K4PZT, David Bower, 512 Elkmont Rd., Knoxville, TN 37922, 865-363-7388, [d.bower@ieee.org](mailto:d.bower@ieee.org).

WX4G, Robert Brockman, P.O. Box 190, Rougemont, NC 27572, 336-364-5060, [bbrockmn@yahoo.com](mailto:bbrockmn@yahoo.com). Some of you may remember Bob as P40J.

**Speaking of new members**, our membership stands at 218, a new record high.



## N4ZC to be presented with 2013 Roanoke Division Service Award

Here's some great news from the ARRL's Roanoke Division:

"I am pleased to announce that **Roger Burt, N4ZC** of Mount Holly, NC is the recipient of the **2013 Roanoke Division Service Award**. Roger will receive this award on Saturday, March 8, 2014 at the Charlotte Hamfest during the ARRL Forum.

Congratulations Roger.

Dennis Bodson, W4PWF

ARRL Director

Roanoke Division"

Let's all show up at the Forum to watch the presentation and applaud Roger for his great work.



## AA4ZZ Rules ...again!

The September VHF Contest results have just been published and AA4ZZ is again top 5 in the USA. Our very own Roger, W4MW, is mentioned and our AA4ZZ contest team is one of the top performers with lots of quotes from AA4ZZ (Paul) himself. Click [\[Here\]](#) to view article in ARRL. Congratulations to the team, shown below.



## In Search of New Worlds to Conquer

By Dennis McAlpine, K2SX

### Where next?

For this year's running of the CQWW CW, W2LK and I began thinking during the summer about places to go. After much deliberation, we opted for Sint Maarten/ St. Martin. The main attraction of that island was that our wives agreed that it would be a nice place to go. Since they had suffered through the travails of Belize, our last CQWW operation, we felt it was only fair to reward them with a bit nicer place. Andy, K2LE and his wife Agnes decided to join us, so the team was set. This would have to be a Field Day type operation since there were no rent-a-stations there.

### Finding a place to operate from

The first task was to find a place to operate from. We started by searching the listings on the internet of rental places using mainly [www.gobeach.com](http://www.gobeach.com) and [www.sunnyvillaholidays.com](http://www.sunnyvillaholidays.com). We looked at rentals on both the French and Dutch sides of the island and were amazed at the quantity of rentals available. Fortunately, CQWW weekend turns out to still be in the "off-season" before rates go into the stratosphere. We eventually selected a villa almost on the shore, Villa Bell'mare, on the Eastern part of the island in an area called Dawn Beach Estates. Thanks to the marvels of the internet, we were able to view the site from satellite views as well as the video tours on the rental agents' websites.

### Putting the gear together

After that, we deliberated on equipment and antennas. Since all three of us had K3s, that seemed like a good choice. Choosing amplifiers was not quite so easy but eventually we went with two borrowed KPA500s (thank to owners NA2M and N2UN) since they could run on the 110 VAC which was available in the villa.

Antennas were not such a simple decision. After much discussion, consultation with others who had been to the island and numerous e-mails with Tom Schiller, N6BT (founder of Force 12, Inc., now Next Generation Antennas) we decided on his Team Vertical 2-element parasitic arrays for both 40M and 20M. These would be on the shoreline spraying RF out over the Atlantic Ocean. Tom suggested another Team Vertical antenna, a 4-element duo-band yagi for 15M and 10M. The verticals and yagi were contest-proven, lightweight, DXpedition

antennas. We decided to use my old Butternut HF9V vertical on 80M and as a backup on the other bands. For 160M, we opted for an inverted L using a Fixed Counterpoise (FCP) radial system. Tom agreed to lend us both the verticals and the duo-bander and shipped them off to K2LE in NY in a hard cover golf bag carrier. We split the antennas into two golf bag carriers while my Butternut and the inverted L went in a used golf bag carrier I picked up from a local golf shop.

### **A deserted island, it was not**

While all this planning was going on, we learned that there would be at least one other operation from the Dutch side of the island plus one from the French side, all within close proximity to us. I e-mailed both people and found that the guys on the Dutch side, N7QT/W4VAB, had rented a villa located 1500' from us up the hillside while FS/K9EL would be about four miles away across the border. Later, we learned of another operation from the French side and that four people from SteppIR, friends of the two guys up the hill, would also be on the island. Throw in a couple of locals and it looked like PJ7/FS would be well represented.

### **The St. Maarten hamfest**

During this time, I had been corresponding with the local BP&T (FCC to you Yankees) officials, Sidney de Weever and Angelo Moeslikan to obtain a PJ7 call. We could have operated using PJ7 plus our home calls, e.g. PJ7/K2SX but we thought a regular call like PJ7W, our eventual choice, would be much easier to send and more unique. We agreed to pay the \$100 for the PJ7 license and we were off to the races. In fact, Angelo even came over to our rental place to pick up the license fee. Can you imagine an FCC official making house calls?

I also exchanged e-mails with Marco, PJ7MF, who is the major domo of a fine Italian restaurant, IZI, near the airport. So what do hams do in a situation like this? That's right, we arranged a group dinner for the Wednesday night before the contest and invited everyone we knew who would be on the island. Marco acted as a gracious host and gave us two prime tables. Eventually, we ended up with the two guys up the hill, two guys from SteppIR, their wives and the three of us and our wives. As soon as we met at the restaurant, the wives took over one table while the hams grabbed the second one. It was a long night of chatting and BS but a good time was had by all and new friends were entered into the log. That is, of course, one reason for these trips we take, isn't it?

### **The contest was a blast - mostly**

We had decided to enter the Multi Op/ Single Transmitter category. For CQWW, this actually is more like a multi-two operation since you are allowed to use one transmitter for running stations, e.g. calling CQ (a.k.a. the "run station"), and another on other bands for working new multipliers (the "mult station"). Do not underestimate the work involved in getting multiple computers running in sync and minimizing the inter-station interference, even with filters on both radios. One problem we never did fully resolve was RF getting into the keyboards of the PCs and messing up the macros, e.g. pushing F1 usually sends the call of the station being worked and then the exchange. In our case, this did not always happen as expected. The result was a lot more use of keyers than planned and tired wrists by the end of the contest.

When we started on a band, the sequence was pretty much a slow build-up of the pile-up with rates approaching 300 QSOs per hour until someone posted us on the internet. Then, the pileup would build in a rush and the rate would drop to 150 per hour as it became impossible to separate out the callers. This year, I was amazed at the number of stations that kept on calling incessantly even if their call was nothing like the partial call I had sent. In some cases, they kept on calling even though we had clearly gone back to someone else. This seemed to be more a problem with the European pileups with the W/VE contingent being a bit more restrained. Remember, during the contest, it is general practice not to run split in order not to take up too much bandwidth. Eventually, the pileup would be worked down and the rate would go back up to 300 Qs/hour before gradually drifting down to 100. Usually, at that point, it was time to move to a new band.

### **A Plea for Sanity and Listening**

Nowhere was this more evident than on 80 meters. Because of the antenna detuning, we had not been running on 80 for any of the contest up until Sunday night. We had worked about 60 mults on the mult station but the band was hardly touched. We decided to save 80 for the last hour or so of the contest. Sure enough, the response was huge. The rate meter on N1MM quickly moved up to 300 QSOs/hour and then bedlam set in. Stations would call and call and call and...well, you get the picture. The worst was a large Multi/Multi from 9A. I answered him on his first call and turned it back to him for his info. He never answered but kept sending his call.

I would make a plea for some sanity on the part of calling stations to listen and follow directions but that has been done before and seems to fall on deaf ears. Based on our experience, this constant calling probably costs about 100 QSOs per hour so no one wins by this practice.

## The End Justifies the Means

Eventually, we crossed the finish line, tired but relatively happy with our results, considering our fairly modest set-up. In the M/S category, we finished with 6,151 QSOs, 149 zones and 536 countries for a bit over 11 million points. Among claimed scores that puts us about fifth in North America and in the mid-20s worldwide – not bad but certainly not at the top of the pack.

## What Would I do Differently Next Time?

The first thing would be to have a 160M antenna that worked – and a back-up. The second would be to reduce/eliminate the inter-station interference, mainly in the PCs and their keyboards. On a more global basis, maybe it's time to think about whether or not it is more than a three man operation to set up such an operation. I am also not sure that having our wives with us was a good idea, although they certainly were a big help at times. At the very least, we should recognize that it is going to take more time to do such a set-up and allot enough time to enjoy the country we are visiting, including those topless beaches – and the great food, of course

## Kudos

We thank Tom Schiller for his invaluable and extensive advice and counsel on antenna selection and the loan of the higher band antennas. I may even have to try one of those babies out in the wetlands out back at home among the gators and snakes. Also, our thanks to the people at the St. Maarten Bureau Post and Telecomm Commission for their help in obtaining the PJ7W call.

## Claimed score:

<u>Band</u>	<u>QSOs</u>	<u>Zones</u>	<u>DXCC</u>
160	1	1	1
80	180	17	75
40	1767	29	105
20	1813	36	120
15	1087	34	117
10	1303	32	118
<b>Total</b>	<b>6151</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>536 = 11.053M</b>



Dennis and Team Being Presented with their PJ7W License

## The Wayback Machine

Going way, way, back, the ARRL was founded one hundred years ago this year. The ARRL is celebrating all year. One of the events is the operation of W1AW/Portable stations from all the states and territories. Some of our members have already participated by operating as W1AW/4 from North Carolina. The March **QST** includes a complete copy of a “midget QST” published at the end of WWI, focused on getting the ARRL back together after the war.

The ARRL has also produced a 30 minute video encapsulating the history of the League. It's on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/ARRLHQ>. Be sure to have a look. There's also a detailed timeline of ham radio and ARRL-related events at [www.arrl.org/ARRLTimeline](http://www.arrl.org/ARRLTimeline).

## More Hamfest Activities

This year, in addition to having our usual booth at the Charlotte Hamfest, we'll also be having a booth at the 42nd Annual RARSFest and ARRL Roanoke Convention held in Raleigh on April 19. Check out <http://rars.org/rarsfest/> for more information on the big event.

And we'll have a booth at the ever-popular Shelby Hamfest/North Carolina Convention on August 30th and 31st.

Details are still being worked out for our participation at both events, so stay tuned for more information.

## The Back Page

- The Charlotte Hamfest is going to be here Mar. 7th and 8th. There are lots of good forums and plenty of goodies to take home for the shack. See Page 1 for details
- The Hamfest Dinner starts at 6:30 on Mar. 7th at Afton Tavern. See Page 2 for details.
- ARRL DX Contest information is on Page 3.
- Have a look at Page 4 to see the big news about the Award being presented to Roger, N4ZC.
- Also on Page 4 is big news from the AA4ZZ VHF Contest Team.
- There's an in-depth article by Dennis, K2SX, about the trip that he and a couple of friends took to the wilds of St. Maarten to operate the CW portion of the CQWW DX Contest last fall.
- There's also news that CDXA is going to participate in hamfests in Raleigh and Shelby this year.

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